
AARON POLLEY

MOORE EDGE, BIRCH VALE, SK65LR

**ECOLOGICAL REASONABLE AVOIDANCE MEASURES
STATEMENT**

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Client	Aaron Polley
Site	Moor Edge, New Mills Road, Birch Vale, Derbyshire SK221BX
NGR	SK 02337 86765
Report Title	Ecological Reasonable Avoidance Measures Statement
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Helen Hamilton Ecology Limited was commissioned prepare an Ecological Reasonable Avoidance Measures Statement for works at Moor Edge, New Mills Road, Birch Vale, Derbyshire SK221BX (NGR SK 02337 86765).
- 1.2 The proposals were granted for “*Erection of 2 x Self-Build residential dwellings at Moor Edge New Mills Road*” (Application no: HPK/2025/0253). This document aims to fulfil Condition 15 which requires that:
- *No development shall commence until a Reasonable Avoidance Measures Statement (RAMS) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The RAMS shall detail a precautionary method of working during the site clearance, ground disturbance and other development activities which have the potential to harm, kill or trap species of amphibians, reptiles, mammals or breeding birds and prepared in accordance with B.S. 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development. The RAMS shall also confirm if and when an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) is needed to be present on site, and timings for all species potentially present on site, including nesting birds. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Statement.*
 - *Reason:- In the interests of protecting ecological species and habitat in accordance with Local Plan Policy EQ5 and relevant paragraphs contained under Chapter 15 of the NPPF.*
- 1.3 The document contains:
- Results of an online desk study for protected species
 - Summary of habitats on site
 - Summary of likely protected and Priority species
 - Avoidance measures.
- 1.4 Figure 1 shows the redline area to which this method statement applies.

Figure 1 Red Line



2. DESK STUDY

Method

- 2.1 The guidelines for accessing and sharing ecological data (CIEEM 2020) were followed.
- 2.2 The desk study was centred around a national grid reference of SK0233786765.
- 2.3 For bats, a desk study was previously completed for the site was referred to (Helen Hamilton Ecology Ltd 2025).
- 2.4 For the European protected species great crested newt, the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside website¹ (MAGIC) was consulted on 9/2/2026, to seek records within 1km.
- 2.5 In addition, an assessment of other likely protected and Priority species was made based upon local knowledge and evidence of local occurrence was sought from the National Biodiversity Network (NBN).
- 2.6 It is important to note that the desk study results provide an indication of the species and habitats present in and around the site, and do not confirm current presence or absence of any.

Species

- 2.7 Derbyshire Bat Group² lists the following bat species which potentially occur in the local area: common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, brown long-eared bat, Daubenton's bat, Whiskered/Brandt's bat and Natterer's bat. Defra's magic website records for granted European Protected Species Licences relating to bats revealed only a single roost for common pipistrelle within 2km (a non-breeding roost was destroyed, reference EPSM2009-1057). The roost was located 890m to the east in Hayfield. Within a wider area up to approximately 4km from site, brown long-eared, soprano pipistrelle and Natterer's roosts were also reported.
- 2.8 No great crested newt records are noted within 1km of the site, and this European protected species is discounted from the study. Other amphibians do occur in the area and could be present on site.
- 2.9 The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) holds records for hedgehog local to the site³, and also for brown hare nearby⁴. Badgers are widespread and common across the Peak District and likely to be present around the area. On site, hedgehog could potentially use dense bramble thickets for refuge and forage across the garden habitats at night. However, badger and brown hare are considered unlikely to be active on site as the applicant has a labrador dog which is frequently in the garden.

¹ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>

² <https://www.derbyshirebats.org.uk/bats-in-derbyshire/>

³ <https://species.nbnatlas.org/species/NBNSYS0000132952>

⁴ <https://species.nbnatlas.org/species/NHMSYS0000080218>

3. SITE VISIT

Method

- 3.1 A site visit to record habitats within the red line was carried out on 6/2/26 in daylight hours. Evidence and potential for protected and Priority species such as bats, nesting birds, amphibians, small mammals and badgers was sought during the survey.
- 3.2 The habitats were recorded using standard habitat definitions and codes (UKHAB 2023).

Limitations

- 3.3 The survey date was in February, when many plants are dormant and animals are relatively inactive. However, the surveyor is an experienced field ecologist with good knowledge of the ecological characteristics of British habitats and requirements of local wildlife, and the site findings are considered sufficient for preparing this method statement.

Habitats

- 3.4 The site visit found the red line area to comprise:
- Modified grassland (g4) (former garden lawn)
 - Suburban mosaic (u1d) (of lawn, hard features, bramble and mixed 'introduced' scrub)
 - U1c artificial unvegetated unsealed (u1c) (driveway)
 - One individual tree (field maple).
- 3.5 Figure 1 shows the layout of these habitats.

Species

- 3.6 No evidence of protected species was noted on site. Hedgehog and breeding birds could potentially be present in bramble, scrub and tree habitats. Amphibians could also occur, especially common toad (Priority species) as there is a small on-line pool to the southwest.

Figure 2 Habitats Map



4. AVOIDANCE MEASURES

4.1 Activities on site that might affect protected and Priority species are:

- Habitat clearance
- Digging of trenches (e.g. for gas main).

4.2 If other, unforeseen ecological matters arise, seek the advice of an ecologist.

Habitat Clearance

4.3 Habitats on site are considered of low conservation status in their own right. However, bramble and scrub in particular could be utilised by protected and Priority species, as follows:

- Breeding birds within scrub and tree habitats
- Hedgehog sheltering in bramble and peripheral refugia such as piled stones, deadwood
- Amphibians sheltering in terrestrial habitats on site, as above.

4.4 All wild birds, their nests, and their eggs are protected by law in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, making it an offence to intentionally kill, injure, or destroy active nests. The main nesting season runs from March to August, during which special care must be taken to avoid disturbing birds.

4.5 Hedgehogs are protected such that it is illegal to kill, trap, or mistreat them. They are listed under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996, and are classified as a "species of principal importance" (or Priority species) in England, Wales, and Scotland.

4.6 All native UK amphibians are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, making it illegal to kill, injure, or sell them. This means that, as with hedgehogs, habitat clearance should be carried out in such a way that any present are manually found and rescued.

4.7 To avoid impacts upon these animal groups, it is recommended that habitat removal is preceded by a hand check of suitable habitats by an 'ecological clerk of works' (ECOW). Ideally this would be conducted outside the period March to August to prevent disturbance of nesting birds. If this is unavoidable, it is recommended that an ecologist checks the vegetation for active bird nests prior to removal. Note that if an active nest is found, work will have to await fledging before it can continue in that area. The search will also look for hedgehogs and amphibians, and remove any found to a safe place away from the works.

Digging

4.8 Digging of trenches (e.g. for gas main or foundations) could result in animals becoming trapped in excavations. This could affect species such as hedgehogs, badgers and amphibians. Impacts can be avoided by following these measures:

- Securely cover trenches overnight with boards
- Provide escape routes such as a ramp out if left overnight
- Site workers to inspect trenches daily to rescue any trapped animals, releasing these safely away from the work zone.

REFERENCES

- CIEEM, 2020. Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). 43 Southgate Street, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 9EH, UK
- Helen Hamilton Ecology Ltd. 2025. *Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Moor Edge, New Mills Road, Birch Vale, Derbyshire SK221BX*
- UK HAB Ltd, 2023. UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0. <https://ukhab.org/>